

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

DPW-01 IO-13 AID-20 OMB-01 EB-11 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 ACDA-19 AGR-20 COME-00 DRC-01 /192 W

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O R 251130Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3142

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION USUN

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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CINCUSARPAC

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7/13 AF
7TH PSYOPS
COMUSSAG
III MAF
CINCPACAF

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PHNOM PENH 10297

JOINT EMBASSY/DAO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, MOPS, CB
SUBJECT: KHMER REPORT-SEPTEMBER 25, 1973

GENERAL

1. A RELATIVELY QUIET WEEK WAS HIGHLIGHTED BY FANK MILITARY GAINS ON ROUTES 1 AND 4 AND AT KOMPONG CHAM, AND A RENEWAL OF GKR PROPOSALS FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN KHMER. ENEMY ACTIVITY, ASIDE FROM A SAPPER ATTACK ON A PHNOM PENH POWER PLANT, WAS LARGELY VERBAL WITH SIHANOUK BLAMING LACK OF MILITARY PROGRESS ON THE CESSATION OF ARMS DELIVERIES FROM CHINA AND NORTH VIETNAM AND GRUNK/FUNK MEDIA LAUNCHING THE "BIG LIE" THAT THE U.S. HAS RESUMED BOMBING. AS RICE STOCKS IN PHNOM PENH DWINDLED TO A TWO-WEEK LEVEL AND THE ROUTE 5 RICE LINE REMAINED BLOCKED BY THE ENEMY, PLANS ARE BEING MADE TO AIRLIFT RICE TO THE CAPITAL CITY FROM BATTAMBANG.

POLITICAL (INTERNAL)

2. THE GKR LAUNCHED A NEW PEACE INITIATIVE ON SEPTEMBER 24 WHEN MINISTER OF INFORMATION SUM CHHUM READ A DECLARATION
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RENEWING THE 6 POINT GKR PEACE PROPOSAL OF JULY 6 AND APPEALING TO KHMER ON THE INSURGENT SIDE TO BREAD WITH THEIR VIETNAMESE ALLIES AND ENTER NEGOTIATIONS TO END THE CONFLICT IN CAMBODIA, AS HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE IN LAOS AND VIETNAM. THE DECLARATION ALSO REAFFIRMED GKR SUPPORT FOR THE JANUARY 27 PARIS ACCORDS WHICH CALL FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES FROM KHMER TERRITORY. THE MINISTER REVEALED, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, THAT

THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE REACTION FROM THE OTHER SIDE TO GKR PEACE PROPOSALS TO DATE, BUT HE EXPRESSED A CONVICTION THAT THE SITUATION WAS CHANGING AND THAT NEGOTIATIONS MAY BE POSSIBLE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

3. ON OTHER SUBJECTS THE MINISTER NOTED THAT, WHILE THE KHMER ARE NOW MORE SELF-RELIANT, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE U.S. WOULD USE ALL OR SOME OF THE ONE MILLION DOLLARS A DAY SAVED AS A RESULT OF THE CURTAILMENT OF AIR SUPPORT TO HELP STRENGTHEN THE FANK. HE CLARIFIED ALSO THAT THE HEALTH OF SIHANOUK'S MOTHER QUEEN KOSSAMAK, WHO HAS BEEN HOSPITALIZED SINCE SEPTEMBER 18, HAS IMPROVED AND THAT THE MISSION OF BG LON NON IN THE U.S. HAS BEEN EXTENDED.

4. EFFORTS TO CHART A COURSE FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF THE FANK MANPOWER SHORTAGE MADE LITTLE HEADWAY DURING THE WEEK. THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL IS NOW CONSIDERING A PROPOSAL TO CREATE A "MIXED GENERAL STAFF", COMPOSED OF BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS AND RESPONSIBLE DIRECTLY TO THE COUNCIL, TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. SENATE PRESIDENT LTGEN SAUKHAM KHOY HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TO HEAD THE GROUP. NO FINAL DECISION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN ON THIS MATTER, HOWEVER.

5. AN INDICATOR OF INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN THE LOCAL SECURITY SITUATION IS THE DECISION OF SEVERAL DIPLOMATIC MEMBERS TO BRING BACK STAFF MEMBERS AND WIVES. THE EMBASSIES OF AUSTRALIA, GREAT BRITAIN, AND ISRAEL AND THE GERMAN WORKING GROUP HAVE ALL INCREASED THE SIZE OF THEIR STAFFS AND AUTHORIZED WIVES TO RETURN. FRENCH TEACHERS AND TECHNICAL ADVISORS HAVE ALSO RETURNED TO CAMBODIA FOLLOWING THEIR NORMAL SUMMER VACATIONS.

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POLITICAL(EXTERNAL)

6. AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HIS COUNTRY WILL GIVE FURTHER AID TO THE GKR FOR IRRIGATION, FLOOD CONTROL, AND AN ELECTRIC POWER PROJECT.

GRUNK/FUNK

7. IN A SERIES OF DECLARATIONS AND INTERVIEWS BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 17, SIHANOUK SURFACED MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GRUNK AND ITS PRICE AND DRV ALLIES, ALL THE WHILE MAINTAINING A NO-COMPROMISE HARD LINE TOWARD THE GKR. IN A T.D. ALLMAN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 18, THE PRINCE CLAIMED THAT THE DRV WAS NO LONGER TRANSPORTING SUPPLIES FROM THE PRC TO CAMBODIA AND WANTED HIM TO

REACH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITH LON NOL. IN REMARKS
ON HIS SEPTEMBER 19 RETURN TO PEKING, HOWEVER, HE
DENIED CRITICIZING THE DRV AND SAID THEY STOPPED TRANS-
PORTING ARMS BECAUSE OF THE PARIS ACCORDS. ON
SEPTEMBER 24 HE ATTRIBUTED THIS DEVELOPMENT TO HANOI'S
DESIRE TO AVOID ANYTHING WHICH WOULD DELAY U.S.
DISENGAGEMENT FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA.

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O R 251130Z SEP 73

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CINCUSARPAC
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III MAF
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8. AS FOR THE PRC SIHANOUK ALSO TOLD ALLMAN THAT HE COULD NOT BLAME THE CHINESE FOR ACTING IN THEIR NATIONAL INTEREST "BUT CHINA IS NOW PLAYING THE BIG POWER GAME WITH THE UNITED STATES". INITIALLY STATING THAT THE PRC CONTINUED TO SUPPLY ARMS, THE PRINCE IN HIS SEPTEMBER 24 STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED ONLY POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT TO PEKING. HE SAW THE PRC SEEKING A SINO-U.S. RAPPROCHEMENT BECAUSE OF FEAR OF A RUSSIAN SURPRISE ATTACK. SIHANOUK'S LAST MESSAGE THIS WEEK WAS A SEPTEMBER 24 WRITTEN STATEMENT TO CORRESPONDENTS THAT THE FRONT WOULD FIGHT ON EVEN IF "FRIENDLY COUNTRIES" NO LONGER SUPPLIED ARMS AND AMMUNITIONS.

9. ALLMAN'S LONDON GUARDIAN INTERVIEW ALSO QUOTED SIHANOUK AS SAYING THE THE INSURGENTS "CANNOT TAKE ANY MAJOR TOWN" AND THAT HE HAD "NO MORE REASON TO BE OPTIMISTIC". THE PRINCE SAW THE STRUGGLE LASTING MANY YEARS. HE TIED THIS PROLONGATION OF LIBERATION TO LACK OF AMMUNITION AND SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT IF AN ATTACK AGAINST PHNOM PENH DOES NOT MATERIALIZE (DURING THE FORTHCOMING DRY SEASON) IT WOULD BE BECAUSE THE CHINESE AND VIETNAMESE DID NOT FURNISH NEEDED AMMUNITION AND SUPPLIES. (NOTE: THE INSURGENTS HAVE EXPENDED LARGE QUANTITIES OF AMMUNITION IN THEIR ATTACK AGAINST KOMPONG CHAM)

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10. SIHANOUK'S KHMER ROUGE BEDFELLOWS TOOK SOME ROYAL FLAK AS WELL. "REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE INTERIOR PART OF CAMBODIA", IENG SARY, THE DEPOSED LEADER'S CONSTANT SHADOW, WAS FOUND "PERSONALLY ANTIPATHETIC" AND THE PEKING KHMER ROUGE COMMUNITY "IS FAR TOO STALINIST". IN A SEPTEMBER 24 SECOND INSTALLMENT OF ALLMAN'S INTERVIEW SIHANOUK NOTED THAT, "...THE KHMER ROUGE MAY TRY TO ASSASSINATE ME". HE ALSO MOVED FROM PREVIOUS STATEMENTS THE KHMER ROUGE AGREED IN MARCH THAT HE SHOULD RULE FOR LIFE TO TELLING ALLMAN, "I HOPE THE KHMER ROUGE KEEP ME AS CHIEF OF STATE FOREVER" BUT ADDING "...I WILL BE A FIGUREHEAD".

11. KOMPONG CHAM'S SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE BROUGHT OUT A WAVE OF NEW THEMES FROM A PANOPLY OF GRUNK/FUNK SOURCES. SIHANOUK CITED AMMUNITION SHORTAGES DUE TO PHAM VAN DONG'S FAILURE TO PROVIDE PROMISED SUPPLIES AS THE CAUSE OF THE FAILED ASSAULT. THE GRUNK PRESS AGENCY, AKI, SUPPORTED BY THE GRUNK FOREIGN MINISTRY AND BACKED BY RADIO HANOI ALL ACCUSED THE U.S. FOR BOMBING THE CITY UNIVERSITY, THE ANGKOR-ERA WAT AND THE KOMPONG CHAM DIKE, WHICH LATTER TACTIC AKI COMPARED TO U.S. BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM'S DIKES AND "HITLERITE FASCIST" (SIC) DESTRUCTION OF THE ZUYDER ZEE DIKES. IN A CURIOUS FAILURE TO COORDINATE THE "BIG LIE", A CLANDESTINE BROADCAST IN KHMER CITING ANTI-AIRCRAFT SUCCESSES NOTED THAT TWO T-28'S WERE SHOT DOWN AND DID NOT MENTION THE ALLEGED WAVES OF AMERICAN F-105S AND F-4'S. IN PHNOM PENH, THE GKR REACTED QUICKLY TO THE ALLEGATIONS OF U.S. AIR FORCE BOMBING AND DECLARED THEM WITHOUT FOUNDATION AND FABRICATED BY THE VC/NVA TO HIDE THEIR FANK-INFLECTED LOSSES AND CONCEAL THEIR CRIMES AGAINST KOMPONG CHAM.

GRUNK/FUNK THEMES

12. THE LEVEL OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE GKR EMERGED AS A PROMINENT THEME FROM VARIOUS INSURGENT SOURCES. SIHANOUK CITED AMERICAN EXPENDITURE IN CAMBODIA AT \$3,500,000 (SIC) EVERY YEAR, AND THE GRUNK FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTED INTENSIFIED U.S. MILITARY AID TO THE GKR

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AFTER AUGUST 15. (COMMENT: THE CAMPAIGN IS PROBABLY

AIMED IN THE SHORT RUN AT EXPLAINING A DEFEAT AT KOMPONG
CHAM WHILE PRESSURING THE PRC AND DRV FOR INCREASED
ASSISTANCE OVER THE LONGER TERM).

13. THE PRINCE KEPT THE SCREWS ON HIS FAVORITE THIRD
COUNTRY ADVERSARIES THE FRENCH AND THE RUSSIANS. HIS
SEPTEMBER 24 WRITTEN STATEMENT REFERRED TO REPORTS THAT
THE GKR HAD ASKED THE TWO TO MEDIATE A NEGOTIATED
SETTLEMENT AND DENIED THE SOVIETS AND FRANCE THE RIGHT
TO CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH KHMER PROBLEMS.

ECONOMIC

14. ON SEPTEMBER 24 PHNOM PENH WAREHOUSES HELD RICE STOCKS
SUFFICIENT FOR ONLY TWO WEEK'S CONSUMPTION. IT IS HOPED
THAT AN ADDITIONAL 5,000 M/T OF THAI RICE WILL ARRIVE BY THE
FIRST PART OF OCTOBER. THE INITIAL SHIPMENTS UNDER A RECENTLY
COMPLETED CONTRACT FOR A FURTHER 12,500 M/T OF THAI RICE ARE
SCHEDULED TO FOLLOW SHORTLY. GIVEN THE DANGEROUSLY LOW LEVEL
OF RICE STOCKS, HOWEVER, AND THE UNCERTAINTY OF THESE
AND OTHER FUTURE ARRIVALS, THE EMBASSY HAS
DECIDED TO BEGIN A RICE AIRLIFT FROM BATTAMBANG TO PHNOM
PENH USING USAF C-130 AIRCRAFT. THE AIRLIFT IS SCHEDULED
TO START OCTOBER 1 AND, UNLESS ROUTE 5 IS REOPENED, WILL
CONTINUE UNTIL 3,000 M/T OF RICE HAS BEEN TRANSPORTED TO
PHNOM PENH

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SS-15 ACDA-19 AGR-20 COME-00 DRC-01 (ADP) W

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O R 251130Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3144

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
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AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
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AMEMBASSY SAIGON
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CINCPACFLT
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MILITARY

15. FANK HAS CONTINUED TO EXPAND THE KOMPONG CHAM DEFENSE
PERIMETER AFTER RETAKING THE UNIVERSITY ON SEPT. 18. THE
AIRFIELD REMAINS ISOLATED AND CLOSE, HOWEVER, AND SUBJECT

TO GROUND AND ARTILLERY ATTACKS. THE CITY PROPER IS STILL RECEIVING SPORADIC SHELLING AND LIMITED GROUND PROBES. ALTHOUGH CONTINUED PRESSURE IS EXPECTED, THE INSURGENTS NOW APPEAR UNABLE TO MUSTER SUFFICIENT MOMENTUM TO LAUNCH ANOTHER MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

16. IN THE CAPITAL REGION, FANK REOPENED ROUTE 1 ON SEPT. 19. THE INSURGENTS SUFFERED 15 KILLED WHILE FRIENDLY CASUALTIES WERE LIGHT. ENEMY FORCES LAUNCHED NEW ATTACKS AGAINST THIRD DIVISION ELEMENTS IN THE ROUTE 2/201 AREA 15 KM SOUTH OF PHNOM PENH BUT MADE NO SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE. THESE RENEWED INITIATIVES ARE PROBABLY DESIGNED TO PROBE FOR WEAKNESSES IN THE CAPITAL'S SOUTHERN DEFENSES. SEVENTH DIVISION ELEMENTS IN OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS NEAR PHNOM BASSET IN THE NORTHWEST ENVIRONS OF THE CAPITAL ALSO RECEIVED INCREASED ENEMY RESISTANCE. SUCH ACTIVITY IS PROBABLY DESIGNED TO KEEP FRIENDLY FORCES FROM EXPANDING GOVERNMENT CONTROL IN THAT AREA.

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17. FANK FORCES ATTEMPTING TO RELIEVE VIHEAR SUOR NORTHEAST OF PHNOM PHEN HAVE BEEN STALLED BY STIFF ENEMY RESISTANCE. THE KHMER AIR FORCE, HOWEVER, HAS MOUNTED DAILY AIR RESUPPLY DELIVERIES TO THE ISOLATED GARRISON.

18. NO PROGRESS WAS MADE IN CLEARING AN 8 KM STRETCH OF ROUTE 5 SOUTH OF KOMPONG CHHNANG. THE ROAD HAS BEEN CLOSED SINCE SEPT. 6. ROUTE 4 CONVOYS TRAVELED BOTH DIRECTIONS BETWEEN KOMPONG SOM AND PHNOM PENH ON SEPTEMBER 22 WITHOUT INCIDENT. HOWEVER, A CONVOY SCHEDULED FOR SEPT. 24 WAS DELAYED BECAUSE OF INSECURITY SOUTH OF KOMPONG SPEU. A 10-SHIP MEKONG RIVER CONVOY ARRIVED AT PHNOM PENH ON SEPT. 24 WITHOUT MAJOR INCIDENT.

19. IN PHNOM PENH ABOUT 12 ENEMY SAPPERS ATTACKED THE CHAK ANGRE ELECTRIC PLANT ON THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 24-25. APPROXIMATELY 20 ROUNDS OF B-40 AND B41 ROCKETS WERE FIRED INTO THE PERIMETER OF THE PLANT CAUSING MODERATE DAMAGE. THREE CIVILIANS WERE WOUNDED.
ENDERS

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